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EXAMINER

GILMAN, ALEXANDER

ART UNIT

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the the tapered through hole must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 6-8, 11, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Tate et al.

With regard to claim 6, Tate (US 6,861,862) disclose a needle-like member that constitutes a conductive contact which electrically connects a first object (21) to a second object (13), the needle-like member comprising:

a columnar member(30) having a first end and a second end;

a through hole that connects the first end to the second end; and

a contact member (17) configured to electrically contact with the first object and arranged at the first end.

With regard to claims 7, 8, Tate discloses that the second object is a circuit board (13) that includes a circuit for generating and transmitting an electrical signal to be supplied to the first object.

With regard to claim 11, Tate discloses that the contact member (17) is located near a periphery of the columnar member in a longitudinal direction to come in contact with a periphery of a connecting electrode of the first object.

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Claims 6-8, 11, 12-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by European

Document EP 1,510,827 – inventor Chabineau et al.

With regard to claims 12, 18, 23, 6, Chabineau et al disclose (Fig. 2) conductive contact that

electrically connects a first object to a second object, the conductive contact comprising:

a first needle-like member that includes a columnar member (14) having

a first end and a second end;

a through hole that connects the first end to the second end; and

a contact member (22) integrally formed with columnar member (claim 23) and configured to

electrically contact with the first object and arranged

at the first end; and

a second needle-like member (12) that is arranged to electrically connect to the first needle-like

member, and slides in the through hole of the first needle-like member; and

a spring member (16) that is fixed to the first needle-like member and surrounds an outer

surface of the columnar member., and applies an elastic force on the second needle-like

member present in the through hole.

With regard to claims 13, 14, 19, 20, 24, 25, Chabineau et al disclose that the second object

(col. 1, section 001) is a circuit that generates and transmits an electrical signal to be supplied to the first object.

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With regard to claim 15, 21, 26, 27, 6, Chabineau et al disclose that the through hole has a constant diameter (Fig. 9).

With regard to claim 16, 22, Chabineau et al disclose that the through hole tapers (51) from the first end toward the second end.

With regard to claim 17, Chabineau et al disclose that the second needle-like member includes a support member (36) that is slidable in the longitudinal direction while being in contact with an inner surface of the through hole; and a contact member (26) that is integrally formed with the support member, and configured to electrically contact with the second object.

With regard to claim 18, Chabineau et al disclose (Fi. 2, 9) conductive contact unit comprising:

a conductive contact including

a needle-like member that includes a columnar member (14) having a first end and a second end, a through hole that connects the first end to the second end, and a contact member (22) configured to electrically contact with an object; and

a spring member (16) that biases the needle-like member in a direction perpendicular to the object; and

a conductive contact holder (100) that includes a holder hole for accommodating the conductive contact.

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With regard to claims 11, 28, Chabineau et al disclose the contact member (22) is located near a periphery of the columnar member in a longitudinal direction to come in contact with a periphery of a connecting electrode of the first object.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 6, 12, 18 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

With regard to tapered configuration of the through hole, it is unclear a purpose of tapering (Specification, p. 25-26, p. 31, section 74). Since that feature is not critical for the invention, it is considered as a design alternative.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alexander D. Gilman whose telephone number is 571 272-2004. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 10:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula A. Bradley can be reached on 571 272-2800 ext. 33. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Alexander D Gilman/
Primary Examiner
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4/8/08